



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Office of the  
Assistant Secretary  
For Administration

Office of Crisis  
Planning and  
Management  
Mail Stop 9305

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Human Resource Managers

FROM: Cliff Oliver  
Director

SUBJECT: Use of OPM Investigative Services for Preemployment Checks

March 1, 2002, the Office of Crisis Planning and Management (OCPM) entered into an *Interagency Agreement* (IA) with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) concerning the use of OPM's investigative services for conducting preemployment checks. These services are collectively known as a *Special Agency Check* (SAC). While preemployment checks are not required by OPM, they are an important tool that USDA agencies and offices can use to screen potential new employees, volunteers, visiting researchers, consultants, and contract staff.

The IA provides USDA agencies and offices access to certain OPM automated investigative services including fingerprint checks, credit checks, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) checks, and Bureau of Vital Statistics checks. Because these services are automated, OPM attempts to provide these services within 5 working days of receipt. Access to these services is gained through the completion of a simple one-page form (OFI Form 86C), which will be provided by OCPM.

Prior to using these services, the agency or office must have a signed release from each subject. Therefore an "*Authorization For Release of Information*" from a current Standard Form 85, 85P, or 86 will be required prior to requesting these services from OPM. In addition, for credit checks, the subject must sign a credit release under the *Fair Credit Reporting Act*.

As an additional benefit, the \$16 cost for a fingerprint check (this doesn't include the additional \$7 OPM processing fee) will be credited when a complete background check is requested, if it is requested within 120 days.

Attached, you will find instructions on using these new services, a copy of the IA, and a copy of OFI Form 86C. In addition, special instructions are also attached concerning the procedure to be used in those cases where USDA Laboratory Managers have certified that an existing USDA employee must continue to have unescorted access to High Consequence Pathogens (HCPs) during the 180-day implementation period for the *USDA Security Policies and Procedures for Biosafety Level 3 Laboratories and Other Laboratories of Consequence*.

Should you have any questions regarding this or other personnel security services, please contact OCPM's Personnel Security Division at (202) 720-5711.

### Attachments

- Instructions on Using the SAC
- Special Instructions for Lab Workers
- Interagency Agreement
- OFI Form 86C

Instructions for Using OPM *Special Agency Check (SAC)* for  
Preemployment Investigative Services

**Fingerprint Check, Credit Check, Immigration and Naturalization (INS) Check,  
or Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS) Check:**

1. To request a Fingerprint Check, Credit Check, INS check, and/or Bureau of Vital Statistics check, an OFI Form 86C must be completed. Complete Items 1 through 12.
2. Item 9, SON, the requesting office is to insert their SON #
3. Item 10, SOI, the requesting office is to insert their SOI #
4. Complete and sign Item 14.
5. Have a completed and signed SF-85, 85P, or 86, on file indicating the subject has signed the *"Authorization For Release of Information"*.
6. The SOI is to send the OFI Form 86C and the finger print card (SF-87 or FD-258) directly to OPM at the following address:

(Via U.S. Postal Service)  
SAC  
OPM-FIPC  
P.O. Box 618  
Boyers, PA 16018-0618

(Via Federal Express, et al)  
SAC  
OPM-FIPC  
1137 Branchton Road  
Boyers, PA 16018  
(724) 794-5612 ext. 126

*Note: Agencies are strongly encouraged to use expedited mail services, such as overnight mail and Federal Express to speed the process.*

7. In the event that the SOI receives results containing derogatory information that may result in denying an individual employment, the SOI should confer with OCPM before making a final determination.

**For a Fingerprint Check:**

1. For a Fingerprint Check, place a code "B" in Item 7 on the OFI Form 86C.
2. For current and perspective federal employees, complete an SF-87 and have the subject sign in the appropriate block.
3. For all others, complete an FD-258 and have the subject sign in the appropriate block.

**Credit Check, Immigration and Naturalization (INS) Check, or Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS) Check:**

1. For a Credit Check, complete the portion of OFI FORM 86C, Item 13, under "Code E". In addition, the subject must sign a credit release under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Place a code "E" in Item 7.
2. For an INS check, complete the portion of OFI FORM 86C, Item 13, under "Code I". Place a code "I" in Item 7.
3. For a BVS check, complete the portion of OFI FORM 86C, Item 13, under "Code N". Place a code "N" in Item 7.

Questions or comments can be directed to the Personnel Security Division, OCPM, at (202) 720-5711.

Instructions for Using OPM *Special Agency Check (SAC)* for USDA  
Laboratory Workers Under the *USDA Security Policies and Procedures for  
Biosafety Level 3 Laboratories and Other Laboratories of Consequence*

Note: This procedure is only to be used in those cases where USDA Laboratory Managers have certified that an existing USDA employee must continue to have unescorted access to High Consequence Pathogens (HCPs) during the 180-day implementation period for the *USDA Security Policies and Procedures for Biosafety Level 3 Laboratories and Other Laboratories of Consequence*.

**Fingerprint Check, Credit Check, and National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Check:**

1. To request a Fingerprint Check, Credit Check, and NCIC Check, an OFI Form 86C must be completed. Complete Items 1 through 12.
2. Item 9, SON, the requesting office is to insert their SON #
3. Item 10, SOI, the requesting office is to insert SOI # AG00
4. For a Fingerprint Check, place a code "B" in Item 7 on the OFI Form 86C. Complete an SF-87 and have the subject sign the back.
5. For a Credit Check, complete the portion of OFI FORM 86C, Item 13, under "Code E". In addition, the subject must sign a credit release under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Place a code "E" in Item 7.
6. Complete and sign Item 14.
7. Have a completed and signed 85P on file indicating the subject has signed the *"Authorization For Release of Information"*.
8. Provide OCPM with a statement from the Laboratory Manager indicating that the subject requires unescorted access to HCPs to complete mission-critical activities during the 180-day implementation period of the *USDA Security Policies and Procedures for Biosafety Level 3 Laboratories and Other Laboratories of Consequence*. In addition, the Laboratory Manager must certify the individual has been a federal employee for at least 3 years.
9. The USDA Agency or Office is to send directly to OCPM the following information:
  - A completed and signed original SF 85P
  - One photocopy of the completed and signed SF 85P
  - A signed credit release
  - A completed and signed OFI Form 86C
  - A completed and signed fingerprint card (SF-87) *(two copies of the SF-87 are recommended in case the first set of fingerprints is unclassifiable)*

At the following address:

Office of Crisis Planning and Management  
Attention: Personnel Security Division  
c/o: USDA HCP Lab Workers  
Room S-302 South Building  
Mail Stop 9305  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9305  
(202) 720-5711

10. OCPM will forward the request for the *Special Agency Check (SAC)* (fingerprint check and the credit check) to OPM for 5-day processing
11. OCPM will forward the request for a NCIC check to the Program Investigations Division, USDA OIG, for 5-day processing
12. OCPM reviews the SF-85P and forwards to OPM requesting an expedited 35-day *Limited Background Investigation (LBI)* or *Background Investigation (BI)* as required.
13. OCPM receives SAC information from OPM and NCIC information from the OIG and conducts preliminary screening of subjects
14. Based on the results of the SAC and NCIC check, OCPM notifies appropriate authorities if subject is not suitable for continued unescorted access to HCPs.
15. OCPM receives closed background investigations from OPM and adjudicates case in accordance with OPM regulations for public trust positions.
16. Based on results of the adjudication, OCPM notifies appropriate authorities if subject is not suitable for continued unescorted access to HCPs or issues a *Certification of Suitability for a Public Trust Position* to be placed in the subject's Official Personnel File.

Questions or comments can be directed to the Personnel Security Division, OCPM, at (202) 720-5711.